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Editorial

Unite the people against the puppetry, brutality and corruption of the Macapagal-Arroyo regime!

The Macapagal-Arroyo regime's unparalleled puppetry, corruption and brutality are tantamount to the further intensification of the Filipino people's poverty and oppression.

The regime has demonstrated that it is rabidly reactionary and antipeople in all aspects. It is thorough in its puppetry and its shameless obsequiousness to US dictates. It is as brazen as the Estrada regime in its use of bureaucratic privilege to further its own interests and those of relatives and friends. It unbridledly violates human rights.

The Party and the revolutionary forces must act to unite the people to resist the Macapagal-Arroyo regime and make it pay dearly for its transgressions.

MALACANANG HAS BEEN GOING ALL-OUT IN ITS PROPAGANDA campaign to rationalize the deployment of American troops in Mindanao. As a mark of her devotion to Bush's policies, Macapagal-Arroyo fanatically defends such armed intervention.

Macapagal-Arroyo's shameless puppetry has fueled a series of protest actions across the country.



The protests began in January and will continue to gather strength in the coming months.

To neutralize the patriotic forces, Macapagal-Arroyo is using the eradication of the despised Abu Sayyaf as an excuse to justify the armed intervention of American troops.



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PANAWAGAN

Ang Editorial Istep sa *Ang Bayan* nag-awhag sa mga mambabasa nga mutampo sa atong pamantalaan pinaagi sa paghatag og mga komentaryo ug sugyot, mga balita o mga rebolusyonaryong kasinalian nga mahimong imantala sa atong pamantalaan.

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But this will come to nought and protests will likely intensify and broaden in the coming months especially with the existence of the following factors or a combination thereof:

- 1) the exposé of the direct participation of American troops in military operations, contradictory to claims that they are simply engaged in training exercises;
- 2) the failure to retrieve the Abu Sayyaf's captives and the stay of American troops in Mindanao beyond the six-month duration set for Balikatan 02-1;
- 3) the maintenance of American troops in Mindanao and their participation in counter-guerrilla operations against the NPA and MILF, after the Abu Sayyaf's captives have been recovered;
- 4) the large-scale deployment of more American troops to Mindanao and elsewhere in the country in connection with the conduct of 15 other Balikatan exercises this year.

We must be ever alert and timely in closely studying the situation since this early, a combination of these factors has already begun to evolve gradually.

THE ISSUE OF ARMED INTERVENTION BY AMERICAN TROOPS AND the development of vigorous protest actions against it provide good conditions for us to broaden and deepen our clarifications to the people on continued US domination of the economy, politics and culture and the need to struggle for national liberation.

Macapagal-Arroyo's promotion of US armed intervention in the Philippines is but one aspect of her thorough puppetry to imperialism. In the economic field, Macapagal-Arroyo is unparalleled in her all-out implementation of imperialist "globalization" and the corresponding surrender of Philippine national patrimony. These policies, which were first enforced at the start of the 1990s, have been pushed with greater momentum by Macapagal-Arroyo despite their harsh effects on the economy and the people's livelihood and social welfare.

ALONG WITH EXPOSING MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S SHAMELESS puppetry, we must thoroughly expose and resist the regime's intense corruption and extreme brutality in order to further propagate to the public the worsening crisis of the ruling system, unite the broadest forces against the Macapagal-Arroyo regime and frustrate its plans to stay in power beyond 2004.

It is important to take notice of prominent and big cases of corruption involving Macapagal-Arroyo herself, her husband, relatives, "official" family and close friends. (*See related article*)

Macapagal-Arroyo is desperately seeking funds for the

2004 elections. She wishes to exceed the sum amassed by Estrada while he was still in power and fears that the Estradas would still be able to use their huge amount of money in the coming polls to restore themselves to power.

It is essential to focus on exposing cases of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, especially those involving the most heinous crimes against the people perpetrated in the course of all-out militarization and the counterrevolutionary war in the countryside.

It is important to highlight through the mass movement and in our propaganda the details and images of actual human rights violations and broaden the struggle that fights for justice for victims of such violations. We must pay greater attention to advancing the antifascist struggle in schools, within the health sector and among church people.

We must put focus on exposing and condemning militarization in the countryside, especially in the areas of operation of the New People's Army and Moro revolutionaries.

We must effectively counter the regime's pro-peace posturing and expose its militarist policies especially in confronting the people's revolutionary struggle. In this regard, we must also expose the regime's maneuvers, especially those of the principal militarists within, to sabotage the peace talks between the GRP and NDF and between the GRP and MILF.

WE MUST AROUSE, ORGANIZE AND MOBILIZE THE PEOPLE against the Macapagal-Arroyo regime to allow the people to advance their rights and welfare in the face of their intensifying oppression and exploitation. Muster the strength of the people in their greatest numbers to resist the all-out puppetry, brutality and corruption of the ruling regime.

The Macapagal-Arroyo regime will confront, in the coming months, growing street protests and the growing ranks of a people rising in resistance. In the past months, growing numbers of forces that joined EDSA 2, including many among the middle forces, have been withdrawing their support for the Macapagal-Arroyo regime. Through the revolutionary forces' thorough exposure of the reactionary government and winning over broader sections of the people to wage resistance, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime will be completely isolated within the coming months.

Not only will its ambition to stay in power beyond 2004 be thwarted; it may be out of power even before the conduct of the elections for which it has been preparing. This is the price it will pay for trampling on the people's rights, disregarding their welfare and plunging them to further depths of oppression and poverty. **AB**

Major cases of corruption under the Macapagal-Arroyo regime

- CODE-NGO, a non-governmental organization led by persons within Macapagal-Arroyo's Cabinet and "Soc Dem" elements close to her, was able to rake in P1.4 billion. It was anomalously granted the sole franchise in, and profited from, a huge commission in its sale of P10 billion worth of PEACe bonds. No more than a glib tongue and close connections to Malacañang and the Department of Finance served as CODE-NGO's starting capital in monopolizing the PEACe bonds and earning huge profits from the latter's sale.

- Presidential husband Mike Arroyo dipped his finger in the coffers of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, using millions from these funds to defray expenses in the May elections and for other purposes.

- Just five days after the new government was installed, the contract with the Argentine firm Industrias Metalurgicas Pescarmona SA (IMPISA) for the rehabilitation of the Caliraya-Botocan-Kalayaan hydroelectric plant was approved. Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and Macapagal-Arroyo herself have been accused of cooking up the deal.

- Macapagal-Arroyo demanded ownership of half the shares of the Philippine Communications Clearinghouse Inc. (PCCI) from Pacifico Marcelo in exchange for the withdrawal of her veto of a proposal establishing PCCI's monopoly over the administration of interconnections among telecommunications companies, a business estimated to rake in P53 billion annually. This occurred when Macapagal-

Arroyo called Marcelo for a secret meeting in Malacañang. With Marcelo's refusal, cases have been filed against him in court. Macapagal-Arroyo has rationalized that she made the demand not for herself but "for the government".

- A deal has been forged granting Danding Cojuangco ownership of the coco levy funds and San Miguel Corporation (SMC) shares and subsequently, control over SMC and other entities acquired with the use of these funds. This, in exchange for Cojuangco's political support and substantial financial contributions to Macapagal-Arroyo's 2004 campaign. Macapagal-Arroyo's recent appointment of People Power Coalition spokesman and deputy campaign manager Conrado "Dodie" Limcaoco is in recognition of his key role in forging the deal with Cojuangco. Macapagal-Arroyo has told Limcaoco that for now, his main task is to "open up at the earliest possible time" the coco levy funds, which have accumulated over the past 16 years. One deal currently being fixed involves the determination of means by which Cojuangco could gain full ownership of SMC.

- The government has withdrawn its tax evasion case against Lucio Tan in exchange for Tan's shift of support from Estrada to Macapagal-Arroyo.



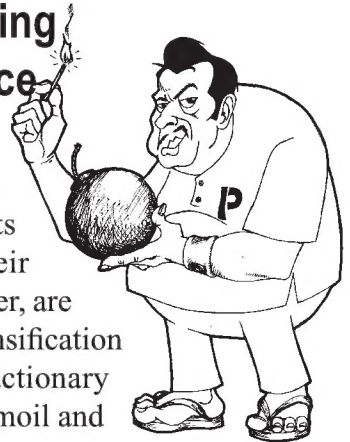
- Macapagal-Arroyo and Presidential Spokesman and Press Secretary Rigoberto Tiglao's close associate George Baviera serves as mediator in ransom negotiations for the release of Abu Sayyaf hostages.

- Senators and congressmen including those from the Macapagal-Arroyo camp have accepted bribes from the Estradas in exchange for their endorsement of Estrada's request to go to the US supposedly to seek treatment for his knee ailment.

- Malacañang now has control of continued, brisk jueteng operations through jueteng lords close to Macapagal-Arroyo and AFP and PNP officials. **AB**

Conflicts among reactionaries intensifying and leading to turmoil and violence

Twists in events since the last week of February, coupled with the Estradas' attempts to evade responsibility in their plunder case and return to power, are signs that the accelerating intensification of conflicts between rival reactionary camps is rapidly leading to turmoil and violence.



By exhausting all legal options through the use of every justification it could think of, the defense has purposely delayed court proceedings on the Estradas' plunder case, based on their reckoning that it would take a long time before a more favorable political climate could be achieved. At the same time, the Estrada camp has been raising the level of violence in the accelerating intensification of conflicts between itself and the Macapagal-Arroyo camp.

The Estrada camp would like to exploit the factors that are fast resulting in the isolation of the Macapagal-Arroyo regime: the intensification of the economic and political crisis; growing protests against the policies of, and measures taken, by the regime; the exposé of explosive issues of corruption as well as other matters involving Macapagal-Arroyo and people close to her; and the rise in the level of violence between their two camps.

The Estradas have made a major issue out of the former president's request to have his knee ailment treated in the US. Estrada would like to avoid judgment by a court that he does not control, under a regime that is not under his direction. The Estrada camp has threatened that violence would erupt in the streets should Estrada be denied permission to go to the US. Estrada has been able to secure the endorsement of the majority of senators and congressmen, including many from the ruling coalition, and even Macapagal-Arroyo secretly supports his bid in the erroneous belief that Estrada's absence would lessen his ability to make trouble for the government.

The Estradas have long known that they could not fully hope to win their court battle while they are out of power. Sensing that the trial would be proceeding at a

faster pace, they have protested the Supreme Court's creation of a special court under the Sandiganbayan to try their case, peopled by justices who would all render an unfavorable verdict.

With this, and a desire to intensify the "crisis", Estrada has admitted to signing bank documents using the name Jose Velarde, after which he dismissed his lawyers, refused to cooperate in any way with the court and focused his attention on winning the public's sympathy. Estrada declared that he trusts neither the Sandiganbayan nor the Supreme Court, that he would not defend himself and would instead rely on the justice of the streets for the disposition of his case. Estrada has imposed impossible demands such as the resignation of Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide and two other Supreme Court justices, Artemio Panganiban and Antonio Carpio (because they have allegedly prejudged him to be guilty). He has also demanded the abolition of the Sandiganbayan court especially created to try his plunder case.

Among the scenarios that the Estrada camp would like to achieve with its tactics are Macapagal-Arroyo's defeat at the hands of a pro-Estrada candidate in the 2004 polls or Macapagal-Arroyo's ouster even before the elections through an EDSA-type people's movement, a coup d'état or other means. **AB**

The return US armed intervention in the Philippines

Balikatan 02-1 to be conducted in April

Another Balikatan exercise will be conducted from April 22 to May 6 in Clark, Pampanga and Subic, Zambales. Up to 2,665 American soldiers are set to join the training. The American troops will be bringing in 17 helicopters of various types, four FA-18 Hornet fighter jets, nine C-130 airplanes, two KC-130 tanks and a logistic ships, the USS Fort McHenry.

The US plans to open the trainings to the armed forces of 10 other countries. This way, Balikatan will form part of "Team Challenge", a military exercise conducted by the US to prepare other armed forces in Asia to participate directly in the US' armed intervention in various countries. An example of the latter is the US' deployment of a multinational "peace force" to East Timor. Last year, Macapagal-Arroyo allowed the entry of different troops allied with the US despite a prohibition by reactionary laws in the absence of either a status of forces or visiting forces agreement.

Questions have been raised on the entry of forces from other countries that have not signed a treaty with the Philippines similar to the VFA. Thus, for now, such forces are allowed to participate only as observers. To make it easier for the US to secure the services of several countries all at once for its military adventures, it seeks to forge multilateral military agreements instead of bilateral accords.

DND Secretary Angelo Reyes has also confirmed that 10 other Balikatan exercises will be conducted this year. Macapagal-Arroyo has defended the growing presence of American troops in the Philippines, saying that even in the past, as many as 5,000 American troops had arrived in the country in a year to participate in such "trainings".

More American troops to be sent to Basilan

The US is set to bring in 300 more soldiers to Basilan because it is dissatisfied with the scale and course of its current operations in the island. Despite the large number of forces, including American troops conducting operations in the Abu Sayyaf's lairs in Basilan, Abu Sayyaf attacks continue without letup, with the soldiers in operation continuing to suffer casualties. Macapagal-Arroyo pretends that she is still considering the US' "request" for more troops, but her regime and the US government have long agreed on this. To circumvent legal barriers, the regime plans to "amend" the newly signed Terms of Agreement for Balikatan 02-1. Since the beginning, the US had never intended to be bound by limitations on the number of troops it could send.

The US has likewise dropped its pretensions since it started calling Balikatan 02-1 as Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines and has clarified that the latter comprises the second arena and forms part of the second stage of its "war against terrorism", which is an extension of its war of aggression in Afghanistan.

The return US armed intervention in the Philippines

US Green Berets join combat operations in Basilan

To evade criticism, the US and Philippine armed forces have insistently denied the participation of American troops in reconnaissance-combat patrols in Basilan. US troop involvement was nonetheless exposed after an encounter between the Abu Sayyaf and troops on patrol in Sitio Lipag, Upper Bulansa, Lantawan on March 17. The Americans immediately dispatched two HH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to the scene of the encounter. Three Filipino soldiers were killed and three were wounded in the encounter. Residents saw with their own eyes the role played by the Americans in the clash. By the time the incident occurred, US Special Forces troops had for several days been joining AFP patrols.

Americans beef up military facilities in Basilan and Zamboanga

A 10-man construction team arrived in Zamboanga and Basilan on March 7 to conduct a survey and collect data on the terrain and facilities in the area. The team also made an assessment of facilities inside military camps and planned the construction of additional facilities for use by American troops. Among the planned structures are a helicopter landing strip, a port at the Naval Station in Zamboanga and other military infrastructure. Additional barracks are currently being constructed at the Edwin Andrews Air Base (EAAB) in Camp Navarro in addition to bathrooms, mess halls, recreation centers and gyms. Digging has begun for the construction of deep wells in the two camps and 10 “bahay kubo”-type structures worth \$350,000 each have been constructed in Malagutay and the EAAB.

Sex trafficking in Davao for Balikatan

At least 36 women from Davao City, mostly age 13 to 18, were reported to have been victimized by pimps who recruited them to go to Zamboanga. The women were promised free air fare and dollar incomes. To convince their parents and relatives, the pimps paid them the equivalent of half of what the women were supposed to earn. The young women were recruited to serve as waitresses, domestics and entertainers in videoke bars. It is estimated that there are currently up to 2,000 women victims of prostitution in Zamboanga.

US spy planes flown over the Philippines

The US brought GNAT UAV (unmanned aerial vehicles) airplanes to Zamboanga in March. The planes, which fly at an altitude of 10,000 feet and are used for espionage, are flown day and night and take off from Zamboanga.

The US has declared that it would immediately commence bombing operations as soon as

it is able to pinpoint the Abu Sayyaf's location. Espionage activities by the US, and especially bombing operations against suspected Abu Sayyaf lairs would be tantamount to direct aggression. Besides this, residents of areas over which the spy planes have been flown as well as human rights organizations are apprehensive over the danger this

would bring. According to Sanders Aviation, the company that flies the spy planes, it was unclear whether the images taken of people and huts were those of the Abu Sayyaf or ordinary civilians due to the island's thick jungle cover. Thus, there is a big possibility that ordinary civilians would be hit by the US bombings.

The return US armed intervention in the Philippines

Women against Balikatan

ONE OF THE MOST COLORFUL, MILITANT AND LIVELY COMMEMORATIONS OF International Women's Day took place on March 8 with a rally in Mendiola. Most of the 4,000 or so who joined the rally were women workers, urban poor and rank-and-file government employees. Women students, migrant workers, teachers, health personnel, church people and other sectors also joined the mass action. Men likewise supported and participated in the march.

The women condemned Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for her out-and-out treachery to the country and called for her ouster. The women also demanded the expulsion of American troops from the country.

The rallyists burned an effigy of Macapagal-Arroyo that portrayed her pro-US and militarist stand and her disregard for the problems besetting the masses of the people.

In Mindanao, the All Women Coalition Against US Troops led an eight-day "silent protest" against Balikatan that culminated in rallies on March 8 in the cities of Davao, Ozamis and General Santos.

Wearing white or black, the women launched their "silent protest" in communities, schools and malls. Up to 300 women from various sectors gathered at Freedom Park in Davao City carrying placards and streamers with slogans calling for the ejection of American troops from the country.

In a statement, the Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (Makibaka) assailed Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for allowing the entry of American troops in the country. Said Makibaka: "Despite being a woman herself, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is an enemy of Filipino women...she is a puppet and a militarist leader who does not enjoy the support of women,



especially from the ranks of the toiling masses...."

Makibaka also said that "...they (American troops) came in to protect the US' vast economic interests in the country, especially in the resource-rich island of Mindanao....Not only do they serve as instruments for the systematic spread of prostitution and human rights violations, they also ruin the country's economy, politics and culture and subject them to their control."

In a statement entitled "A call to the best sons and daughters of the country", Makibaka likewise called on women to live among and eventually join the NPA especially in these times of intensifying US imperialist intervention in the country. **AB**

5,000 march to Clark

Five thousand people marched to Clark Air Base in Angeles, Pampanga on March 1 to protest the conduct of Balikatan in Basilan. The protesters also demanded that Americans troops remaining in Central Luzon be sent home. In a statement, the KMP said that the Balance Piston exercises held in Central Luzon ended on February 15. But American troops were still around by March and were in fact involved in regular combat operations. The march was led by Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and the Central Luzon Alliance for a Sovereign Philippines and joined by workers and peasants from Northern Luzon, Southern Luzon, Bicol and Metro Manila.

Protests in Western Mindanao

A series of protest actions against Balikatan has been launched by various sectors in Western Mindanao starting February. On February 14, progressive organizations conducted a "rekorida kontra-Balikatan" in Misamis Occidental. The *rekorida* encompassed 11 towns and three cities. On February 9, protests in Iligan City were led by Bayan Muna, allied organizations and the Islamic Movement for Electoral Reform and Good Government (IMERGG). When Balikatan was formally launched on February 1, youth activists at the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology protested by lighting candles in the school. Protests were also held in Zamboanga and Basilan.

The return US armed intervention in the Philippines

“Second stage of war”

Bush intensifies US war of aggression

In a speech delivered on March 11, five months after the US began its “war against terrorism”, US President George W. Bush laid down US imperialism’s maneuvers and plans for the “second stage” of the “war against terrorism”. Among them are the expansion of armed intervention in Afghanistan and smaller countries that supposedly serve as “terrorist” lairs such as the Philippines, Georgia and Yemen and the conduct of a broader war against what he called

the “Axis of Evil”.

Four thousand more American soldiers are set to be sent to Afghanistan to “complete” the war in that country. Six months have passed with the US still bereft of a clear victory over Osama bin Laden and his al Qaida organization. The political situation in Afghanistan remains tenuous despite the installation of a new puppet government. There is growing anger among the Afghan people for the US’ armed intervention. Due to the operations of US special military forces and intensifying armed clashes among warlords who now hold state power, thousands of Afghans have been killed and millions more have been forcibly displaced.

US special forces will also be sent to other parts of the globe, including Yemen and Pankisi Gorge in Georgia, near its border with Chechnya. These operations will be held in the guise of “trainings” for the local reactionary armed forces against local

groups being linked to al Qaida.

In addition, the US is bracing for a more protracted, much broader war against the so-called Axis of Evil. The US will reportedly be sending 250,000 troops to Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein’s regime. In March, Bush sent his vice president, Richard Cheney, to the Middle East to persuade and coerce governments



in the region to support the US’ instigation of war on a broader scale. Arab countries have nonetheless voiced their opposition and warned against the US plan.

Relatedly, US Pacific Command chief Adm. Dennis Blair has requested for 5,000 more troops for the US’ “war against terrorism” in the region. Blair made the request to “more effectively secure” US security

Bush praises Macapagal-Arroyo

In the same speech, Bush was all praises for the Macapagal-Arroyo regime for its utter puppetry to the US’ dictates and militarist policies. The puppet regime was singled out for praise, with Bush saying “we (Americans) trust President Arroyo for courageously fighting the terrorist threat”. (check exact quote)

As a reward, he reiterated US promises of added funds, equipment and forces for the Philippine reactionary armed forces. Prior to this, the US had allotted \$19 million for the AFP’s modernization in its war against “terrorism”. This forms the first installment of a \$68-million aid package to be given by the US in the next five years. The US has also approved the Philippines’ request for more C-130 airplanes, trucks, patrol ships and a number of F-5E fighter planes. **AB**

The US war of aggression in Mindanao (1899-1913)

To be able to concentrate their forces on Luzon and the Visayas, the American colonialists deceived the Sultan of Sulu into signing the Bates Agreement of 1899 that declared US sovereignty over the island of Jolo. With the defeat of major sections of revolutionary resistance in Luzon, the US unilaterally scrapped the agreement in 1904 and declared total war on Mindanao.

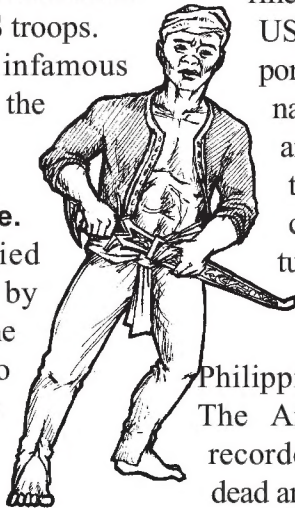


Moro warriors and the people of Mindanao gallantly resisted the American troops. Because of their superiority in both the number and quality of their weaponry, the American soldiers were able to defeat the struggle, but not before suffering major losses themselves. In retaliation, entire communities were massacred by US troops.

Among the most infamous of these incidents are the following:

Bud Dajo Massacre.

Up to 900 persons died in a three-day attack by the Americans on the entrance to Bud Dajo volcano in Jolo where Tausug resistance fighters had entrenched



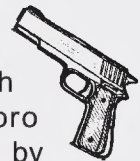
themselves from March 5-7, 1906. Most of the dead, including children and women, were riddled with bullets. According to someone who saw the bodies, many of them were hit more than 50 times. The Tausugs, who were armed only with krises, spears and a few rifles, were no match to the US troops who were supported by cannons from their naval troops. Gen. Leonard Wood instructed the two battalions under his command to kill or capture the Tausugs. (General Wood became Governor-General of the Philippines from 1921-1927). The American troops were recorded to have suffered 21 dead and 75 wounded.

Bud Bagsak Massacre. Residents of Lati, Jolo entrenched themselves from January to June 1913 in solid fortresses in the mountains of Jolo. US troops launched a series of attacks on the fortresses until they reached the entrenchment at Mt. Bagsak. On June 11, 1913, Gen. John Pershing ordered an attack on the fortress. Up to 2,000 persons died including 196 women and 340 children. Although the incident was exposed in the media and assailed by the American people, Pershing was never punished.

Massacre in Talipao. Residents of Talipao, Jolo opposed paying taxes (such as the cedula tax and toll fees for the use of roads) to the US. They entrenched themselves in Mt. Talipao and on August 13, 1913, were attacked and defeated by American troops. This being the last major act of resistance by the Moros, the US declared an end to its war on Mindanao. **AB**

The .45 caliber semi-automatic pistol was created in 1911 because American soldiers needed a more powerful assault weapon against the so-called "huramentado". "Huramentado" was the pejorative term given to Moros who, armed only with krises, would attack American soldiers. They were ready to give up their lives rather than be enslaved by the imperialists. The Moro warriors would bind their joints to prevent bleeding should they be hit in the arm

or leg. Thus, they did not falter and could continue attacking the persons shooting at them. With such determination shown by the Moro warriors, they could not be felled by lower caliber Springfield and Krag rifles and revolvers, which were the standard issue then for American soldiers. Consequently, many American officers and men died at the hands of the valiant Moros. **AB**



Psywar campaign against NPA instigated by CIA

The Special Affairs Group of the AFP under the baton of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is currently focused on an aggressive psywar and smear campaign against the NPA. The smear campaign is centered on conjuring up the specter of the counter-intelligence operations hysteria within the revolutionary movement in the last half of the 1980s, even if its ringleaders, who include the masterminds of “Operation Missing Link” (OPML) in Southern Tagalog and “Kampanyang Ahos” (Kahos) in Mindanao, are now being coddled by the government. Their principal aides in the psywar campaign are the very ringleaders of the anti-infiltration hysteria who have refused to rectify themselves and have instead turned traitor to the revolution, their paid hacks in the mass media and US-funded NGOs.

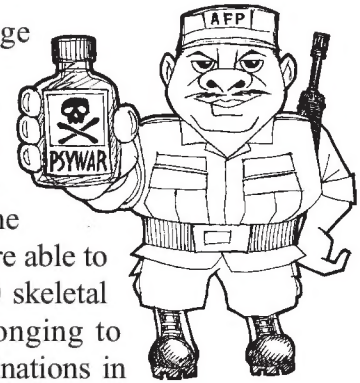
The enemy aims to destroy the integrity of the Party and NPA to lay the ground for US plans to wage direct aggression against the revolutionary movement in the Philippines. They would like to portray the NPA as a terrorist group that deserves to be targeted by their “war against terrorism”.

The enemy campaign involves the creation of fictitious accounts and the distortion of facts. They transfer the skeletal remains of unidentified persons and “exhume” them from their new burial grounds before the mass media. The masterminds of the anti-infiltration hysteria have already been expelled, but the enemy continues to fuel lies that such practices continue within the revolutionary movement. Even recent cases where the AFP and PNP summarily execute (“salvages”) and bury their victims are blamed on the revolutionary movement.

In the last week of March, the Southern Luzon Command of the AFP supposedly discovered 58 skeletal remains and six cadavers buried side by side in Candelaria, Quezon. [The six freshly buried bodies are likely those of victims of recent AFP “salvaging”.] The skeletal remains were even blessed in a ceremony and provided “decent burials”. To complete the drama, the AFP invited a number of surrenderees and traitors to the revolutionary movement and erected a “Monument to Victims of the NPA” – a colossal irony in the face of the AFP and PNP’s disrespect for, and desecration of, the

remains of their salvage victims.

Philippine Army spokesman Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta, has woven the fantastic tale that in the past five years, they were able to exhume more than 200 skeletal remains allegedly belonging to victims of NPA assassinations in the 1980s. This is supposed to be exclusive of 4,000 NPA members executed in the past decade. The disappearance since February of six activists from Central Luzon believed to have been abducted by the military is being maliciously blamed on the revolutionary movement by the AFP. Also part of the CIA’s psywar campaign is the publication of the book *To Suffer Thy Comrades* in the last quarter of 2001 containing distorted accounts on OPML. Ricardo Reyes and Nathan Quimpo, principal ringleaders of Kahos in Mindanao who refused to rectify and eventually turned traitor to the movement, and who are now being coddled by the enemy, served as advisers in the writing of the book. Also involved in the project is Joel Rocamora, a CIA agent. **AB**



The AFP’s psywar campaign aims to negate the undeniable victory of the Second Great Rectification Movement as well the big advances that have resulted and the higher prestige enjoyed by the Party and the revolutionary movement. The rectification movement has repudiated the anti-infiltration hysteria perpetrated by the renegades and has reaffirmed revolutionary principles in meting out revolutionary justice. Among them are the need to earnestly ascertain the facts, systematically observe the rules of evidence and pass judgment based on detailed analysis and incontrovertible evidence; to comply with proper and just investigation and trial procedures; to grant the accused the opportunity to seek counsel or to defend themselves; to accord humane treatment and prohibit cruelty to prisoners; and to respect life and human rights. The enemy would like to make it appear that the opposite prevails. **AB**

AFP propaganda against the NPA

The AFP and the reactionary state are trying to paint a distorted picture of the correct, just and legitimate revolutionary tasks of the NPA to tarnish the high level of prestige enjoyed by the NPA and portray it as a plain criminal and “terrorist” organization to cover up their own sordid reputation. This is part of the enemy’s overall counterrevolutionary scheme and lays the ground for more vicious armed intervention of US forces in the country against the NPA. They are now concentrating on the following hate scenarios against the NPA:

“Recruitment of Minors”. The AFP accuses the NPA of the large-scale recruitment of minors. The few minors they have captured in the countryside who are part of the revolutionary movement’s auxiliary reserve, and even child civilians, are portrayed as NPA combatants. The AFP uses the children they have arrested as fodder for such propaganda, against their wishes and in violation of their rights as children. In 1998, the Party reiterated the policy that the minimum age for recruitment into the NPA is 18 years.

“Extortion”. The AFP mockingly brands as “extortion” the legitimate policy of revolutionary taxation against class enemies in areas encompassed by Red political power. In many instances, and as exemplified by the recent shenanigans of the 17th and 50th IB in Ilocos and Cordillera, the AFP appropriates the name of the NPA in bogus letters using coarse language and threats against businessmen to fuel their anger at the NPA. If the businessmen fall for the trap, the military officials themselves pocket the money they have extorted.

“Kangaroo Court”. The people’s court is called a “kangaroo court” by the AFP, a pejorative term that insinuates that the justice system implemented by the revolutionary movement is arbitrary, acts hastily and is all for show. This contradicts the fact that each case is systematically studied, heard, judged and reviewed according to the principles that guide the implementation of revolutionary justice. Apart from their smear campaign against the revolutionary movement, they intend to cover up for the country’s rotten and inutile justice system that is skewed in favor of the ruling class and oppresses the poor, and likewise obscure the numerous cases of “salvagings”

and arbitrary killings perpetrated by the military and “agents of the law” against civilians, without benefit of any kind of process.

“Political assassinations”. The meting out of revolutionary justice on a number of rabid reactionaries proven by the people’s court to have incurred blood debts against the revolutionary movement and the people is condescendingly called “political assassinations”. The enemy portrays as “plain politicians”, fascists and murderers like Col. Rodolfo Aguinaldo, who was meted punishment.

“Kidnap-for-ransom”. To depict the NPA as “terrorist”, the AFP accuses it of engaging in kidnap-for-ransom. Most people are aware that those who engage and provide protection to groups that commit such crimes—like the Abu Sayyaf—are in the AFP and PNP, not the revolutionary movement. **AB**

AFP black propaganda belied by NPA-Abra

The NPA Agustin Begnalen Command (ABC) in Abra exposed the AFP’s hand in a bogus statement signed by a “Ka Sugpon” supposedly of the Leonardo Pacsi Command (LPC). The statement claimed that five Abra town mayors, namely those of San Isidro, La Paz, Lagayan, San Juan and Bucloc, were being targeted for liquidation by the NPA. The ABC condemned the 503rd Bde for being the author of this black propaganda that seeks to terrorize mayors supportive of the NPA and goad others to fight the people’s army.

According to the ABC, of all the mayors mentioned, only Bucloc Mayor Mailed Molina, who also leads a faction of the Cordillera People’s Liberation Army, should be meted punishment. The ABC said that Molina was a target for having incurred many blood debts to the revolutionary movement and the people—for his armed treachery to the revolution, the murders of several Red fighters and civilians, the seizure of farmers’ lands and many others. The ABC also clarified that the Leonardo Pacsi Command operates in Mountain Province, and not in Abra. **AB**

People wage effective resistance against Mining Act of 1995

The Mining Act of 1995 opened all of the country's natural resources to foreign exploitation. Various brutal and fraudulent means are being used to seize lands of peasants and national minorities covered by mining applications, ravage the people's livelihood, health and valuable traditions, destroy the environment and suppress resistance.

Since the Philippine Mining Act was signed into law on March 3, 1995, a flurry of applications for the Financial Technical Assistance Agreements (FTAA), Mineral Production Sharing Agreements (MPSA) and Exploration Permits have been filed. Approved applications cover 677,770 hectares. There are pending applications covering an additional 13,548,006 hectares. Together they cover about 5% of the total land area of the Philippines, mostly ancestral lands of national minorities.

Due to the persistent and heroic resistance put up by the people in different areas of the country from the far north to the far south, and especially in areas where the revolutionary movement is strong, foreign plunderers are being thwarted and driven out in succession.

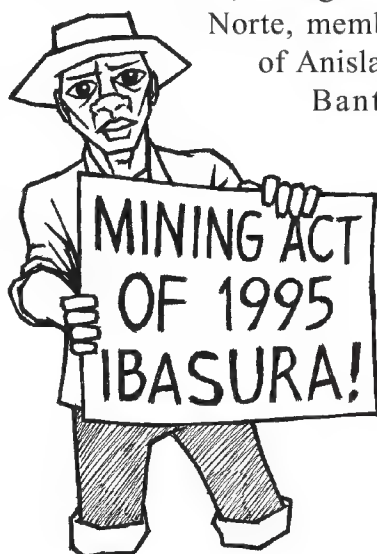
In 2000, the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Capiz and Iloilo passed resolutions prohibiting foreign mining in the province. Western Mining Corporation (South Cotabato) and Arimco Mining (Nueva Vizcaya), both Australian mining firms, have been unable to start operations due to the heated protests of the people in these areas.

Recently, the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Oriental Mindoro declared a 25-year moratorium on

mining in the province. In particular, they opposed the plan of Crew Minerals Development Corporation, a Canadian company, to undertake open-pit mining, which involves bulldozing and excavating the soil to obtain even low-grade ore. Five other mining applications are pending in the province.

In Mati, Davao Oriental, the Mandaya (a lumad tribe) and environmental activists in Mindanao are actively opposing the applications of 20 mining companies. The latter's mining licenses cover 20,000 hectares of the Mandaya's ancestral land. Due to their firm opposition, the Mandaya have also been able to prevent the planned expansion of a local company that mines silica in the area.

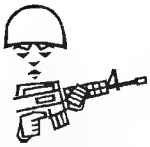
In Placer, Surigao del Norte, members of Anislagan Bantay-



Kalikasan Task Force (Abakataf) and Aklas-Kinaiyahan marched to the Manila Mining Corporation's mining site on December 30 to protest the destruction of the watershed areas that supply water to their farms and the entire province.

The people of Batarasa, Palawan are opposed to the planned construction of a \$150-million nickel refinery plant. Sumitomo Metal Mining Corporation, a giant Japanese mining corporation and Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corporation owned by Ronaldo and Manuel Zamora are partners in the project. The company intends to mine 10,000 tons of nickel and 750 tons of cobalt mixed sulfide in a span of 20 years.

Despite the rapidly expanding struggle of the people against foreign mining, the big danger posed by the massive entry and plundering forays of foreign mining firms continues, aside from the perils posed by mines that are already in operation. In arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people against foreign plunder, it is important to include areas where assistance from the government and from reformist groups like the "Soc Dem" and mercenary NGOs enables foreign mining firms to deceive the people. In waging education-propaganda work and in organizing and mobilizing the people against foreign plunder, it is important to raise the level of the anti-imperialist line together with expanding the antifeudal and antifascist line. **AB**



FASCIST STATE ON A RAMPAGE

The following are among the latest cases of human rights violations from January to March:

March 15. At least 10 Dumagat families were forced to leave their homes in Sitio Tayabasan, Barangay San Jose, Antipolo City by soldiers of the 1st IB. The soldiers threatened to kill them and burn down their houses if they returned. Carmelita de la Cruz, a Dumagat woman, was also sexually harassed when soldiers forced her to strip in front of her children.



March 1. Revolutionary Proletarian Army (RPA) troops killed Pedro Trabajador, 70. The RPA serves as armed goons of Danding Cojuangco and as a paramilitary force of the AFP. “Tay Pedring” was killed while he was on his way home to Sitio Tanquinto, Barangay Mabini, Escalante City, Negros Occidental. He was a member of the National Federation of Sugar Workers which actively resists the large-scale landgrabbing of peasant lands by the Cojuangco camp to expand its cassava and corn plantations.



Meanwhile, on March 7, the RPA arbitrarily ejected Arden Edem and stripped him of his right to till his land in Hacienda Pandanon III, Don Salvador Benedicto, Negros Occidental.

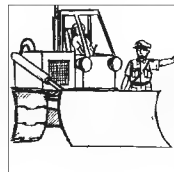
February 15. Butchers from the 74th IB mercilessly killed 95-year-old Adriano Custodio, a former member of the Hukbalahap and a respected resident of Barangay Mabini, Mulanay, Quezon. The military vented its ire on the old man when it found the body of an NPA guerrilla in his house being readied for transfer to a funeral parlor. He was shot and stabbed repeatedly and his feet hacked several times with a bolo. After this, the fascists took

the Red fighter’s body and paraded it around the barrio while shouting threats against taking care of the NPA.

First week of February. The houses of 465 families in Sogod, Barangay Apopong, Cebu City were demolished upon orders of the City Housing Land Management Office. Less than a fourth of the evicted families were accommodated by the government in a relocation area.

February. Troops from the 27th IB and 11th Special Forces illegally ransacked and stole personal belongings from, houses in the villages of Butril, Kabuling and Lebua, all in Palembang, Sultan Kudarat. Col. Pedrito Magsino, 61st IB commander, covered up for the soldiers’ abuses, arguing that this was all part of pursuit operations against the kidnappers of a Korean and a businessman.

January 21. Policemen forcibly evicted residents of Barangay Central, Dipolog City, demolishing about 1,000 houses. Barangay Central, which is near the Dipolog coast, is the site of a planned P65-million “development project” funded by the World Bank. The residents were relocated to a place that had only one toilet and had neither water nor electric services.



January 9. Policemen violently and without warning, demolished 120 houses affecting 800 residents in Sta. Cruz, Barangay Puntod, Cagayan de Oro and illegally arrested 10 civilians. Among those arrested were Nero Vallar, Bayan Muna regional officer and Danny Bulosan, leader of Nagkahiusang Kabus sa Sta. Cruz, an urban poor organization. An arrest order for them was issued only after the victims had been mauled and taken into custody. **AB**

Fascist attacks on Bayan Muna

Since March 2001, there have been at least 37 attacks by the reactionary state against members and supporters of Bayan Muna, the party of patriotic and democratic forces.

Among these cases are the murders of Peter Dagawin, Ricardo Romero, Roberto Nepa, Wilfredo Mananghaya, Lando Cabagay, Roger Fernando and Philip Lopa, all Bayan Muna

leaders from various provinces.

There have also been several cases of torture, illegal arrest, forced disappearance and other human rights violations committed against members and leaders of Bayan Muna.

Since February, several Bayan Muna leaders in Central Luzon have been illegally arrested, with authorities refusing to surface them. Missing to this day are Bayan Muna coordinator Juan Sario Orcino and his companion Honorio Ayroso. They were abducted on February 7 in Barangay Sto. Niño, San Jose City, Nueva Ecija by armed men believed to be elements of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency.

Also missing are Edwin Villaruz, a tricycle driver, and Rowena Bayani, both Bayan Muna members. They were abducted on February 4 in Barangay Cabituculan West, Maria Aurora, Aurora by suspected 70th IB troops.

On February 2, policemen raided the house of Rustico Pamintuan and Luz Patinga, both farmers from Tarlac. After being robbed and mauled, they were illegally arrested and detained at Camp Makabulos, Tarlac and slapped with trumped-up charges of kidnapping for ransom and robbery.

In Kapatagan, Zamboanga del Sur, Dante Sumatra Bones, a carpenter and Bayan Muna supporter, was arrested and later died from injuries suffered after a severe beating. His head was banged against the cement floor of the PNP headquarters in Kapatagan while he was being mauled by PO3 Solomon Sanchez.

Long before this, Camenia Abatan, an Ata-Manobo native and auditor of the Bayan Muna-Talaingod chapter, was abducted by 72nd IB troops on June 23, 2001. She remains missing.

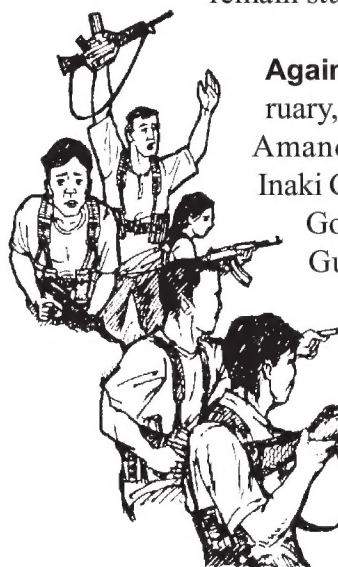
According to Bayan Muna, these relentless attacks prove that the Macapagal-Arroyo regime has no respect for the people's human rights and for humanitarian law. **AB**

NPA metes punishment on social menaces in Leyte

Against PASAR. Red fighters from the NPA Mt. Amandewin Command in Leyte burned on February 28 a vehicle owned by PASAR, a copper processing company. PASAR was punished for its continued violations of the rights of its workers and for wantonly disposing toxic chemicals into the sea and other nearby areas.

According to Ka Dodong Malaya, the command's spokesperson, PASAR has notoriously been violating people's rights since it was established in Isabel, Leyte in 1983. Five hundred families were forcibly evicted when the plant was constructed. It suppresses the rights of its workers to self-organize and depresses their wages. Neither do their workers enjoy any job security.

The NPA had repeatedly warned PASAR to change its ways, but the company refused to comply. The burning of PASAR's vehicle by the Mt. Amandewin Command is an initial punitive measure that will lead to graver forms of punishment should the company remain stubborn.



Against a druglord. Also in February, special operatives of the Mt. Amandewin Command punished Inaki Guljuran (also known as Aquí Goluran), a notorious druglord. Guljuran, who was punished in Ormoc City, was one of the biggest druglords in Leyte, especially in Ormoc and nearby towns.

Guljuran was sentenced to death on January 5, 2001 by a people's court. Because he ignored repeated warnings to stop his criminal activities, the sentence was carried out by Mt. Amandewin Command operatives. **AB**

7 soldiers killed, 17 wounded in Surigao del Sur ambush

Seven soldiers were killed and 17 were seriously wounded in an ambush by Red fighters in Surigao del Sur on March 15. According to correspondence reports from Northeast Mindanao, it was around 1 p.m. when the NPA Ka Bob Ruiz Command (BRC-NPA) opened fire on a dumptruck filled with elements of the 62nd IB in Barangay Tagbobonga, Hinatuan. An NPA unit under the BRC was on its way to another area to launch a tactical offensive when it received reports of enemy movements in Tagbobonga. Using the intelligence data they had gathered, they immediately set an ambush trap. The soldiers were ambushed while they were traversing the PICOP Concession Road from their base in Sta. Maria, Trento, Agusan del Sur on their way to Bislig City in Surigao del Sur.

The 62nd IB is a notorious fascist unit responsible for wreaking havoc on the people of Agusan del Sur and serves as goons of the Paper Industries Corporation of the Philippines (PICOP).

A Red fighter was killed in the clash.

No tactical offensives during Holy Week —Ka Roger

Gregorio “Ka Roger” Rosal clarified on March 20 that the NPA would not conduct tactical offensives during the Holy Week except under “special circumstances”. He said that this was out of respect for “Catholic tradition”. He also explained that contrary to erroneous reports in the media, this was not tantamount to a ceasefire declaration.

In this regard, Ka Roger assailed the Macapagal-Arroyo regime’s deceptive declaration of a unilateral ceasefire for the Holy Week. He stressed that this was “mere posturing by the regime to make it appear that it was pro-peace” and that the regime “would not implement its ceasefire anyway”. The regime is using its declaration to call on the Valentin Palamine Command in Far South Mindanao to release its prisoners of war despite the absence of a SOMO (suspension of offensive military operations) in the region.



2 policemen killed, 1 wounded in Samar raid

Two policemen were killed and one was wounded when New People’s Army (NPA) guerrillas raided the Philippine National Police (PNP) station in Motiong, Samar on February 28. The station is only several score meters away from the Maharlika Highway, the main thoroughfare linking the entire country from Luzon to Mindanao.

The raid was conducted at 4:30 a.m. and was over in 30 minutes. The successful raid yielded 10 M16s, three M14s, a 12-gauge shotgun, four 9 mm pistols, four grenades, ammunition, magazines and other military equipment.

Several score from the people’s militia participated in the raid. A team of Red fighters and militia set up a temporary roadblock along the Maharlika Highway while the tactical offensive was underway, to prevent civilians from being caught in the crossfire.

Contrary to media reports, the NPA did not sustain any casualty. Before they withdrew, the guerrillas went on formation in front of the municipal hall to make sure that all NPA and militia forces were fine and accounted for.

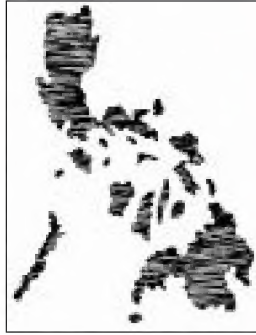
Utterly shamed by the incident, the PNP command in Eastern Visayas ordered the relief of the entire Motiong police force including its chief, Senior Insp. Isidro Acaylar. Also ordered relieved was Samar PNP provincial director Senior Supt. Felipe Portacio.

Release of NDF leader demanded

NDFP chief negotiator Luis Jalandoni recently demanded the release of Edgardo Sacamay, NDF peace panel consultant for Central Visayas. Sacamay was abducted by AFP elements in Subangdaku, Cebu on March 5. He was blindfolded and mauled and denied the right to see his family and consult with human rights advocates. He was also subjected to intense interrogation and accused of an assortment of crimes.

Electricity rates to rise by 116%

Electricity rates are set to rise by 116% due to a petition filed with the Energy Regulatory Board by the Manila Electric Cooperative (Meralco). The disclosure was made by Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) on March 25. The electric rate hike means that consumers will be paying an additional P3.97 per kilowatt hour (KwH). According to BAYAN, Meralco is invoking the Electric Industry Power Reform Act which allows “unbundling” or the segregation of basic electricity charges into its different components. It also calls for a hike of P1.12 per KwH on basic charges and P2.85 on the other components.



Bombs planted in Metro Manila

To terrorize the people, seven bombs were planted and discovered in several public places in Metro Manila. The “bombs” were designed not to explode but to sow fear. The explosive devices were all found almost at the same time found by PNP elements. They were all accompanied by manifestos from an “Indigenous Federal State Army”. The bomb scare is believed to have been perpetrated by the Macapagal-Arroyo regime to justify the entry of American troops in the Philippines.

Plunder Watch rally violently dispersed

Policemen violently dispersed a rally being held by hundreds of Plunder Watch members in front of the Sandiganbayan on March 13. The rally was launched during a hearing of Joseph Estrada’s perjury case. The rallyists demanded “no compromise, no exile for Estrada”. Police broke up the rally despite an earlier agreement allowing the demonstrators to hold a program in the area.

Oil prices hiked anew

Oil companies hiked prices of petroleum products by 30-35 centavos on March 19. As usual, they justified the hike by saying that prices of crude oil have risen in the international market. Progressive organizations and forces, who were quick to protest the move, also condemned the collusion between the Macapagal-Arroyo regime and the oil companies.

Macapagal-Arroyo regime discards peace talks

The Macapagal-Arroyo regime has dissolved the GRP panels holding talks with the NDFP and the MILF, saying that the talks would continue through back channels and would be conducted by emissaries. Two weeks before, the regime suspended formal peace talks with the MILF. It had already suspended formal peace

talks with the NDFP as early as last year, insisting on maintaining back channel negotiations only.

The NDFP has made it clear that back channel talks “cannot replace the serious hard work carried out by the negotiating panels, their subcommittees, consultants and staff”. NDFP peace panel chair Luis Jalandoni said that with its refusal to recognize past agreements with former regimes, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime

has effectively discarded the peace talks. He said that Macapagal-Arroyo “shows no interest to engage in peace talks that address the roots of the armed conflict”. Instead, said Jalandoni, “she calls for capitulation and threatens to all-out war”. Jose Ma. Sison likewise said that “Macapagal-Arroyo pretends to be for peace negotiations, yet she unleashes brutal campaigns of suppression”.

On March 16, Malacañang demanded that the NDFP and MILF give up their arms and surrender to the government. At the same time, the regime also brusquely warned the NDFP and MILF that it would use all its power against them should the two organizations refuse to desist from their supposedly terrorist and criminal attacks against government forces.

P10-B compensation for martial law victims pushed by Congress

The Human Rights Committee of the House of Representatives passed on March 10 House Bills 3793 and 3048 obliging the state to grant compensation to victims of martial law and allotted P10 billion for this purpose. The bills were filed by Satur Ocampo, Crispin Beltran and Liza Maza of Bayan Muna and Oscar Rodriguez of Pampanga.

Government debt swells

For 2001 alone, government borrowings ballooned to P218.207 billion. This is on top of its P2.166 trillion debt for 2000. More than half is in the form of government bonds and debts incurred by various government agencies.

Macapagal-Arroyo-Cojuangco deal assailed

More than a hundred small coconut farmers led by the Bicol Coconut Planters Association, Inc., Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and Pinag-isang Lakas ng Magbubukid sa Quezon rallied in front of the San Miguel Corporation (SMC) office in Pasig City on February 27. They opposed the deal between SMC and Kirin Co., Ltd. and demanded the ouster of Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco from SMC. They said that the deal only strengthened Cojuangco's control over funds that rightfully belonged to the farmers.



Unemployment worsens

The unemployment rate rose from 9.8% in October 2001 to 10.3% in January. This was the result of the latest Labor Force Survey conducted by the National Statistics Office. Of those who lost their jobs since October 2001, as many as 247,000 were from the agricultural sector, 47,000 from the service sector and 86,000 from the industrial sector.



553 Metro Manila companies ask exemption from CoLA

With all the loopholes that could be availed of in granting cost of living allowances (CoLA), 553 companies in Metro Manila have applied for exemption from paying the P30 daily CoLA to their workers. Among those qualified to seek exemption by the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards are establishments that are "going bankrupt"; business about to go bankrupt and banks that are facing problems.



Israel launches fierce attacks on Palestine

Israel relentlessly launched a two-week assault on Palestine in March and reoccupied the territory. Israeli troops withdrew only after they had practically pulverized Palestinian towns. The attacks were launched to force Yasser Arafat to grant bigger concessions in newly reopened negotiations. US emissary Anthony Zinni arrived in Israel this March to lay down initial measures for a ceasefire and an agreement between Israel and Palestine.

300,000 protest in Spain

Some 300,000 demonstrators thronged to Barcelona, Spain on March 16 to protest the ongoing European Union Summit. The summit is an annual meeting attended by European heads of state. The demonstrators protested against "globalization" and "European capitalism". The protests ended in violence when police hurled tear gas into the marchers' ranks. Up to 50 persons were arrested and scores injured in the clashes. Another rally attended by hundreds of protesters was simultaneously held in France.